

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 DAMASC 01516 291253Z

50

ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W

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P R 291100Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1102

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 1516

EXDIS

BEIRUT FOR RCAA DWOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRN, SY

SUBJECT: SYRIAN ARAB AIRLINES AIRCRAFT PURCHASE

REF: DAMASCUS 1489

1. ON JUL 27 LOCKHEED REPRESENTATIVE GEORGE LOMBARD INFORMED ME THAT ACCORING TO A RELIABLE SOURCE THE COMMITTEE DECIDING THE PURCHASE OF THE NEW AIRCRAFT FOR SYRIAN ARAB AIRLINES HAS NOW SUBMITTED ITS REPORT TO PRESIDENT ASAD. ACCORDING TO LOMBARD'S SOURCE THE COMMITTEE HAS SPLIT WITH THREE MEMBERS (GENERALS SHIHABI AND JAMIL AND COLONEL KHOULI) IN FAVOR OF THE LOCKHEED 1011B AND GENERAL MOKAYED AND TWO OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE IN FAVOR OF THE AIRBUS. THE PRESIDENT WILL NOW MAKE THE FINAL DECISION. LOMBARD'S SOURCE SEEMS TO BELIEVE THAT PRESIDENT ASAD WILL DECIDE IN FAVOR OF THE 1011B. IN ADDITION, GEORGE LOMBARD HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH HIS "ABU DHABI CONTACT" WHO ALSO INFORMS HIM THAT THE DECISION WILL GO TO THE 1011B.

2. ACCORDING TO LOMBARD, SHIHABI IS REALLY IN FAVOR OF THE 1011B (IT IS ALLEGED IN DAMASCUS THAT HE IS GETTING A LOCKHEED PAYOFF) BUT HAS BEEN DISSEMBLING IN ORDER TO PROTECT HIMSELF. THIS MAY WELL BE TRUE ALTHOUGH SHIHABI
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SEEMED QUITE OPEN AND SURE OF HIS INFORMATION WHEN I SPOKE

TO HIM A FEW DAYS AGO (SEE REFTEL) IN ANY EVENT I WILL
CONTINUE TO DO MY BEST TO PUSH AMERICAN AIRCRAFT, PARTICULARLY
THE LOCKHEED 1011B AND WE WILL JUST HAVE TO WAIT AND
SEE WHAT HAPPENS.
SCOTES

NOTE BY OC/T: EXDIS CAPTION ADDED PER S/S-O:MR. JOHNSON

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 29 JUL 1974
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